

(1/24/24 District Administrator's Corner Article)

January is finally coming to an end. The start of the new calendar year can really throw us for a loop, especially if we have challenging weather...which we have experienced! No one told us that all precipitation for two months would be delivered to us in one week! But regardless of how you feel about this month, it's basically over and many are pleased to see it go. The days are getting longer, Valentine's Day is coming up and, hopefully, blizzard winds are getting tired. In my opinion, there is always something to be positive about.

With the amount of daylight getting longer, finally it's no longer pitch black at 4:30 pm. The weather is slowly starting to turn and we can now go on evening walks without them feeling like a chore. We are all looking to the daylight saving time clock change in March, as we know then that we have made it through another Wisconsin winter. With all the indecision around the tradition, and how it affects children, I researched the quick history of how it started. The real history of daylight saving time is not quick—it is complex.

Daylight saving time (DST) was first introduced in Germany in 1916 during World War I as an energy saving measure. The U.S. followed by adopting DST in 1918, but it was not followed unanimously until the 1940's. The next couple decades were a free-for-all, when states and localities switched between DST and standard time (ST) at will. To put an end to the clock chaos, Congress finally passed the Uniform Time Act in 1966, which standardized daylight saving time and its start and end dates across the country—with the exception of Hawaii and Arizona, which opted to keep standard time year round (farmersalmanac.com).

During the energy crisis of 1974, the U.S. decided to adopt permanent DST. However, the public wasn't so keen on the idea after all, and people have been disputing it since. Then, finally in March of 2023, the Senate unanimously passed the Sunshine Protection Act, which would put an end to the semi-annual changing of the clocks. Yet, while more sun in the evenings might sound nice, it was once again not completely decided.

Poor sleep and overall health for students is a concern. Maybe it is time to do away with the confusion of DST. Our focus on sleep for the students of River Valley shouldn't be exclusive to when we change the clocks. Consistency with time is best for kids. Even though legislative motion has stalled a decision, let's consider what is best for kids and make a decision. After all, getting good rest is something we can all be positive about.

Sincerely,

Loren Glasbrenner, District Administrator
River Valley School District